CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT	New Soviet Fortifications and Military Activity Along Soviet-Iranian Border	DATE DISTR.	13 April 1953				
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Soviet Frontier Activity

- Recently the Soviets have begun construction of new concrete pillbox-type
 fortifications in the Astara frontier area. On 12 June 1952 construction of
 a pillbox was begun near the mouth of the Astara river. This fortification
 is equipped with four gun positions situated in such a way that they can
 direct fire toward both land and sea. The fortification does not exceed
 1 meters in height.
- After the incident at Ambaran, in which the Soviet soldier Sobotin was killed by an Iranian frontier guard, the Soviets began construction of a stone fortification on the Almadin mountain. This fortification commands the Ambaran road.
- 3. A new watchtower is being constructed on the north side of the Reza-Baghi border post and is to be equipped with machine gun positions. Two rooms have been built on the right side of Reza-Baghi which will serve as resting quarters for the company stationed at Reza-Baghi, Korpi Post, and Anuz.
- 4. Daily truck traffic from Soviet Astara carries materials and equipment to Zardali for the construction of continuous concrete emplacements along the eastern side of this border post. In addition, the Soviets are digging a well at Zardali and are ploughing new furrows along the frontier which will extend for 12 kilometers from the foot of the mountain east of Shandan to the Anuz border post and through the valley north of Baghchelar (N38-27, B48-35). This valley serves as an easy route to Lenkoran. In order to increase the control in this area, 3 new guard houses have been erected with a distance of 8 kilometers(sic).

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- 5. In the past three months, the Soviets have built three large buildings in Soviet Astara to be used as a clinic and rest home. In addition, they have also built a 12-room apartment which will serve as officers' quarters, dancing hall, and stable.
- 6. Soviet authorities have encouraged the inhabitants of Ashaghi-Gaduk (located between Shalejuran and Kaluz border posts) to vacate their village. As a result, the residents have moved to Lirik and Kaluz. Ashaghi-Gaduk has been reoccupied by 20 armed soldiers.
- 7. The frontier activity of the Soviet guards has increased recently. In several instances patrol schedules have been stepped up so that patrols are sent out at half-hour intervals.
- 8. On 9 and 10 June 1952, the Soviet frontier guards at the Kaluz border post performed firing exercises with heavy machine guns. 1st Lt. Burov, Commander of the post, was present at the target practice. No firing has been heard since this time.
- 9. All Soviet soldiers and frontier guards stationed at the border posts of Qapchi-Mahalleh, Astara, and Lezhi were inoculated against typhoid fever in May 1952.

Soviet Naval and Air Activity

- 10. On 20 May 1952, a new type of Soviet vessel equipped with an antiaircraft gun approached Iranian waters in the Astara area. These new vessels are manned by a crew of 10.
- 11. On 7 June 1952, Soviet ships bearing the numbers 343 and 144 cast anchor two kilometers off Soviet Astara. No. 343 was equipped with two guns of unspecified size and one antiaircraft gun. No. 144 carried two companies of troops and some civilians. The ships were accompanied by two smaller craft equipped with antiaircraft guns. A barge from Soviet Astara, carrying forty civilians and soldiers, met the ships. Six officers, one company of soldiers, and eight horses were transferred to the Astara barge from Ship No. 144. The barge then returned to Astara. At 1800 hours the officers returned to ship No. 144 and at 1900 hours both ships departed for the north.



. The Soviets have produced a new three-engine aircraft which is capable of conveying medium-sized tanks. This new plane has the following specifications:

Wing span: 55 meters
Wings are situated on top of fuselage
Distance from propeller to tail: 22 meters
Trade Mark: T-24

Road and Rail Traffic

13. Recently 20 new type trucks, called Pobeda have arrived in Lenkoran and Astara from Baku. These vehicles travel back and forth between Baku and Lenkoran-Astara, transporting frontier guards and commodities.

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3. Comment: No aircraft of such description or designation is listed in the official Air Force publication "Characteristics and Performance Handbook USSR Aircraft, March 1952". It is possible that source is referring to Type 24, a cargo glider.

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